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PROGRAMME QUESTIONS: PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION IN 1996

Progress of work in the field of population in 1996: Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The present report reviews the progress achieved by the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat in implementing its programme of work in the field of population in 1996. It covers the activities of the Department in subprogrammes dealing with the analysis of demographic variables at world level; world population projection; population policy and socio-economic development; monitoring, review and appraisal, coordination and dissemination of population information; and technical cooperation in population. Other continuing activities of the Department are also described.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat acts as the focal point for population, economic and social analysis and information, and provides substantive support to pertinent intergovernmental machinery, including the Commission on Population and Development and the Statistical Commission. Those functions include research and policy analysis and the execution of technical cooperation activities in the areas of population and statistics.

2. The Commission on Population and Development, at its twenty-ninth session, reviewed the progress of work for 1995 and the proposed programme of work for the biennium 1996-1997.

3. The present report deals with the research and technical cooperation work and information activities carried out by the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat in the field of population during 1996. The activities are grouped according to the subprogrammes of the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

4. The Population Division made every effort to implement the programme of work adopted by the Commission on Population and Development and endorsed by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. The work programme for the biennium 1996-1997 was formulated and implemented within the basic framework set forth in the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, taking into account the recommendations of the International Conference on Population 1994[1] and other relevant international conferences.

5. Some delays in the implementation of programmed outputs occurred as a consequence of the measures taken by the Secretary-General in response to the financial situation of the Organization. Some activities were cancelled or had to be carried over into 1997.

6. The Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis continued to collaborate closely with agencies, programmes and other bodies of the United Nations system in the implementation of the work programme and in connection with the follow-up activities to the International Conference on Population and Development. In addition, the Department maintained close collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in carrying out technical assistance activities within the technical support services/country support team (TSS/CST) system.

I. ANALYSIS OF DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AT WORLD LEVEL

A. Fertility and family planning

7. A study entitled Child Survival, Health and Family Planning Programmes and Fertility,[2] which examines the nature of relationships between mortality and fertility in the context of socio-economic development, has been published.

Three case-studies were done in Ecuador, Indonesia and Zimbabwe to examine those relationships in three different socio-cultural settings. The study concluded that increased provision of basic medical and family planning services would lead to significant reductions in both fertility and infant and child mortality and demonstrated a potential synergistic relationship between intervention programmes promoting both child survival and fertility decline.

8. The third report concerning global monitoring of contraceptive use, entitled Levels and Trends of Contraceptive Use as Assessed in 1994,[1] has been published. The report estimates that 57 per cent of couples with the wife in reproductive age were using some form of contraception in or around 1990. By 1996, that level had probably reached 60 per cent, given the recent pace at which contraceptive use has been increasing. The level of contraceptive use or contraceptive prevalence varies greatly among the less developed regions, from an estimated 12 per cent of couples in sub-Saharan Africa to 79 per cent in Eastern Asia. In the more developed regions, the average is 72 per cent. Contraceptive prevalence has been growing in most developing countries, while in the developed countries, the main trend has been towards greater use of modern methods. The most widely used methods are those used by women: female sterilization, accounting for 30 per cent of contraceptive use worldwide; intra-uterine devices, for 21 per cent; and oral pills, for 14 per cent. The main male methods, condoms and vasectomy, account for 9 per cent and 8 per cent of contraceptive use, respectively. As of 1993, nearly 90 per cent of national Governments reported that they provide direct or indirect support for access to modern family planning methods. Although both access to and use of contraception have been increasing, there are still many countries, especially in Africa, where much of the population is unfamiliar with any type of contraception.

9. A study entitled Family Building Process: An Approach to Evaluation of the Impact of Family Planning Programmes has been completed and submitted for publication. The study explains that there are two major disadvantages in using aggregate period measures of fertility, such as total fertility, to study fertility change: period measures are affected by changes in the timing of births that are independent of changes in fertility levels and aggregate measures give no indication about changes in reproductive patterns among women of different parities. In order to overcome those problems, a new approach using the family building process as an analytical framework has been adopted. The impact of contraceptive behaviour is examined for women at each parity, thereby defining the relationship between levels of contraceptive use and parity progression ratios. The approach allows the estimation of a hypothetical level of fertility at each parity in the absence of contraception. This level is then used as a benchmark against which to compare observed fertility. Such a strategy permits a better assessment of the impact of family planning programmes.

10. During 1996, work continued on the study entitled Evolving Patterns of Fertility Behaviour in Developing Countries, which examines levels and trends in fertility as indicated by new fertility data made available from a large number of national surveys undertaken in developing countries in recent years. Data gathered for the study are also used to update two computerized databases for monitoring and analysis of fertility and family planning. Preliminary results

from the analysis of the Latin America and Caribbean region suggest that most countries in the region have undergone a process of fertility decline during the past two decades, but the magnitude of the reduction they experienced varies widely depending on the levels of development and socio-cultural settings. Based on the results of this analysis, the countries have been classified into four groups in a continuum of fertility transition from incipient fertility transition to completed transition.

11. The different approaches used so far for measuring the quality of family planning services have some major problems that are common to all of them. One of the problems is that they all rely heavily upon ad hoc sample surveys that tend to produce reliable localized information but no system-wide information for the entire programme. These approaches also have a number of methodological limitations. In order to address some of these issues, the Population Division is preparing a report entitled Measurement of the Quality of Family Planning Services: Issues and Challenges, based on six background papers contributed by experts in the field. In addition to synthesizing the findings from the six background papers, the publication examines the general issue of institutionalized monitoring of the quality of services and explores various possibilities for integrating the measurement of quality as a routine function of the service delivery system. The six background papers encompass a variety of experiences in different regions of the world, and present empirical findings on substantive and methodological issues pertaining to measurement of the quality of family planning services.

B. Mortality

12. Databases containing a comprehensive set of data allowing the estimation of infant and child mortality by sex for countries in Asia and Latin America have been issued under the titles Child Mortality by Sex: Asia and Child Mortality by Sex: Latin America and the Caribbean. These sets complete the series begun in 1995 with the issuance of the database entitled Child Mortality by Sex: Africa. The databases contain, for each country, the basic data used in the estimation of mortality in childhood by sex and the estimates derived from them. The data compiled in them cover the full spectrum of sources, from vital registration systems to specialized sample surveys.

13. A study on the status of women and child survival was completed and will be published shortly under the title Too Young to Die: Genes or Gender?. The study provides a comprehensive view of the extent and causes of female disadvantage in mortality during childhood. It contains a comprehensive set of estimates of infant and child mortality by sex for 82 of the 108 developing countries that had a population exceeding one million in 1990. The countries covered account for 92 per cent of the population of the developing world.

14. With respect to infant mortality, all but two countries (India and Jordan) recorded higher levels of mortality among male than among female children. In terms of mortality between exact ages 1 and 5, the levels prevalent among female children exceeded those among male children in about half of the countries considered. However, in most of those countries, the mortality of girls exceeded that of boys by small margins. The findings corroborate that China and

most of the countries in the Indian subcontinent as well as those in Northern Africa and Western Asia experienced higher levels of female than male mortality at ages 1-4 and that a pattern of moderate levels of excess female child mortality have existed in a number of Central American countries and in some countries of Western and Middle Africa.

15. A major conclusion of the study is that discrimination against girls in ways that affect their health and survival is by no means universal in developing countries. However, because the few countries in which such discrimination exists account for a sizeable proportion of the world's population, the impact of the female disadvantage is significant. Thus, it is estimated that an excess of 250,000 girls die each year because of discrimination.

16. What mechanisms underlie the female disadvantage in terms of survivorship? The study finds that differential treatment of boys and girls with regard to health care use provides the strongest explanation of the mortality differentials observed. Sex differences in immunization coverage are also likely causes of the differences in survival recorded in certain countries. In societies where female disadvantage is marked, parents prefer boys over girls because the former are more likely to be the source of long-term economic welfare. Consequently, parents tend to allocate resources in a way that favours boys. If such discriminatory behaviour is to be modified, the economic opportunities for women need to be enhanced by providing for their participation in the labour force.

C. International migration

17. The estimates of the international migrant stock in each of the 214 countries or areas constituting the world in 1990 have been expanded to include a distribution by sex. Thus, the proportion of female migrants in each country or area was estimated for the years 1965, 1975, 1985 and 1990. The estimates show that the proportion of women among all international migrants remained virtually unchanged at nearly 48 per cent during the period 1965-1990. However, important differences existed between developed and developing countries. Thus, women were slightly more numerous than men among international migrants in developed countries until 1985 and only slightly less numerous in 1990; whereas in developing countries women were outnumbered by men by at least 18 per cent during the whole period. At the regional level, women were particularly under-represented among international migrants in Western Asia, where they accounted for 40 per cent of the migrant stock in 1990, and they were slightly overrepresented among international migrants in Northern America, where they accounted for 51 per cent of the migrant stock in 1990. In other regions, the percentage of women among international migrants did not deviate markedly from the global average. These estimates confirm therefore that women have participated in international migration in numbers that closely approximate those of men.

18. The Statistical Commission is to consider at its twenty-ninth session, in 1997, a set of recommendations on statistics of international migration, in draft form. The draft report, which has been prepared with the support of the

Population Division, presents a framework for the compilation of statistics on the flows of international migrants that permits a better understanding of the meaning and scope of the different sources of data available in a country. If approved, the framework will permit the collection and dissemination of a more comprehensive set of statistics than those gathered in the past by the Statistics Division of the United Nations.

19. The Population Division was invited to participate in the first Regional Conference on International Migration in North and Central America, held in Puebla, Mexico on 13 and 14 March 1996. The Conference was attended by representatives of the Governments of Belize, Canada, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and the United States of America. The Conference adopted a joint communiqué in which the countries represented committed themselves to safeguarding the human rights of migrants; combating the trafficking in migrants; and collaborating in various ways to enhance the control of migration. The Population Division presented a paper on migration and development in North and Central America at the Conference.

D. Internal migration

20. Work on the estimation of the components of urban growth has been completed and the main results were presented in the World Economic and Social Survey, 1996 (chapter IX, entitled "How much do we know about urban growth in the late twentieth century?")[4] and in a paper prepared for the Symposium on Internal Migration and Urbanization in Developing Countries: Implications for Habitat II, held at the headquarters of the United Nations Population Fund in New York from 24 to 26 January 1996. A major finding is that natural increase accounted for about 60 per cent of the growth of urban areas in developing countries during the 1960s and internal migration and reclassification accounted for the other 40 per cent. During the 1970s, the contribution of internal migration and reclassification to urban growth rose to 44 per cent, but dropped again to 40 per cent during the 1980s. However, whereas in the 1960s and the 1970s there was little regional differentiation, by the 1980s marked differences between regions were noticeable. Thus, internal migration and reclassification accounted for only 25 per cent of urban growth in Africa, 34 per cent in Latin America and 64 per cent in Asia.

II. WORLD POPULATION PROJECTIONS

A. World population estimates and projections: the 1996 and 1998 Revisions

1. The 1996 Revision

21. Work has been completed on the 1996 Revision of the world population estimates and projections. The results were officially announced in November 1996. The horizon for the projections is kept at the year 2050, as first introduced in the 1994 Revision, but the new base date is 1995. That is, there is one series of demographic estimates for the period 1950-1995 and four projection variants for the period 1995-2050. Detailed demographic estimates by

age and sex are presented for the first time for three areas, the Gaza Strip, Macau and Western Sahara. In addition, the number of countries for which the demographic impact of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is explicitly incorporated was increased from 16 in the 1994 Revision to 28 in the 1996 Revision, to take account of the continuation of the spread of the human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS).

22. The results became available in the autumn of 1996, in the form of annex tables, a wall chart, World Population, 1996, and a computer database on diskettes. Additional computer databases and the detailed analytical report will be issued during 1997. The results were also disseminated through press releases and press packages.

23. The major report with respect to the 1996 revision, World Population Prospects: The 1996 Revision, will contain an extensive analysis of recent demographic trends, with specific chapters dealing with population size and growth; fertility; mortality; international migration; the demographic impact of AIDS in 28 countries; a detailed comparison of the results of the 1994 and the 1996 Revisions; methodology; sources of data and demographic methods. Some of the major results emerging from the report are set out below.

24. At mid-1996, the world population stood at 5.77 billion persons. Between mid-1995 and mid-1996, the world population increased by 81 million persons. Between 1990 and 1995, the world population grew at 1.48 per cent per annum, with an average of 81 million persons added each year. This is much below the 1.72 per cent per annum at which population had been growing between 1975 and 1990, and much below the 87 million persons added each year between 1985 and 1990, which stands now as the peak period in the history of world population growth.

25. Currently, 4.59 billion persons - 80 per cent of the world population - live in the less developed regions and 1.18 billion persons live in the more developed regions. The average annual growth rate is about 1.8 per cent in the less developed regions and 0.4 per cent in the more developed regions.

26. The population growth rate of 1.48 per cent per annum for the period 1990-1995 indicated in the 1996 Revision is significantly lower than the 1.57 per annum projected by the United Nations two years ago in its 1994 Revision. The world population in 1995 is 29 million (0.5 per cent) lower than projected in the 1994 Revision. The population of the less developed regions is 34 million lower than in the 1994 Revision, and the population of the more developed regions is 5 million higher. The reduction in the expected growth rate results from a faster fertility decline than previously anticipated (a world average of 2.96 children per woman during the period 1990-1995, instead of 3.10 children assumed in the 1994 Revision). A major consequence is that the population of the world projected in the medium-fertility variant, the one usually considered the most likely, will be 9.4 billion in 2050, nearly half-a-billion (4.7 per cent) lower than that projected in the 1994 Revision. This population could be 11.1 billion in 2050 according to the high-fertility variant, or 7.7 billion according to the low-fertility variant; these two variants, while less likely, are also possible courses of the world population growth.

27. The population of the less developed regions is now estimated to have grown at 1.77 per cent per annum between 1990 and 1995, instead of 1.88 per cent as projected by the United Nations two years ago. A major factor in the lower than expected growth rate are faster than anticipated fertility declines in a number of countries of South-central Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

28. Another factor in the reduction of the expected growth rate in the less developed regions is the higher estimated mortality in countries affected by wars (Burundi, Iraq, Liberia, Rwanda) or by the spread of AIDS. For example, life expectancy for 1990-1995 in Eastern Africa is estimated at 46.7 years, 3.9 years lower than projected in the 1994 Revision.

29. The population of the more developed regions increased at an average of 0.40 per cent per annum between 1990 and 1995. The major changes occurred in Eastern Europe, where life expectancy declined from 70 years in 1985-1990 to 68 years in 1990-1995, and net international migration in 1990-1995 was estimated to be +1.4 million instead of -0.5 million projected in the 1994 Revision. Overall, fertility in these regions declined only marginally faster than expected two years ago, to 1.68 children in 1990-1995, instead of 1.70. In Europe (except for Eastern Europe), life expectancy increased slightly faster than previously projected, reaching 76.7 years in Western Europe for 1990-1995.

2. The 1998 Revision

30. Work has already started on the 1998 Revision of the world population estimates and projections.

B. Urban, rural and city population estimates and projections: the 1996 Revision

31. Work has been completed for the 1996 Revision of urban, rural and city population estimates and projections. The major change is an extension of the projection horizon for urban and rural populations to the year 2030, instead of the year 2025. The horizon for cities remains the year 2015.

32. The 1996 Revision provides data on urban and rural populations for all countries until the year 2030. It also provides population projections until 2015 for around 400 urban agglomerations with a population of 750,000 or more persons in 1995 (instead of 1990, as in the previous Revision). The wall charts Urban and Rural Areas, 1996 and Urban Agglomerations, 1996 are expected to be issued in early 1997. The results of the 1996 Revision are also available on diskettes for IBM-compatible computers. The report entitled World Urbanization Prospects will be available later in 1997.

C. Subcommittee on Demographic Estimates and Projections

33. The nineteenth session of the Subcommittee on Demographic Estimates and Projections of the Administrative Committee on Coordination was held at the headquarters of the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva from 25 to

27 June 1996. At that session the Subcommittee successfully arranged a schedule for coordination and dissemination of the 1996 rounds of consistent demographic and sectoral estimates and projections, which were undertaken by the Population Division in collaboration with the regional commissions (for demographic estimates and projections), the International Labour Organization (for labour force estimates and projections), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (for agriculture population estimates and projections), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (for household estimates and projections), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (for literacy estimates and projections) and WHO (for mortality parameters for demographic estimates and projections). The Subcommittee also discussed arrangements for the coordination of the 1998 rounds of estimates and projections.

D. Expert Group Meeting on Projecting Old-age Mortality and its Consequences

34. The Population Division organized and hosted an Expert Group Meeting on Projecting Old-age Mortality and its Consequences from 3 to 5 December 1996. The major purpose of this meeting was to help in the extension of the estimates and projections of country populations prepared by the Population Division, from an upper age limit of 80 years to a new upper limit of 100 years.

III. POPULATION POLICY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A. Population policies

1. Comparative studies of new population policy issues at the global level

35. In 1996, the study entitled International Migration Policies and Programmes: A World Survey was completed and submitted for publication. It examines policies in regard to permanent or long-term migrants; labour migration; refugees and asylum-seekers; undocumented or illegal migration; as well as relevant international and regional instruments. It also focuses on policies in regard to social, political, economic and cultural integration of immigrants; policies in regard to citizenship, nationality and naturalization; and family reunification policies.

36. The study emphasizes the fact that regulatory restrictions and a State's view of migration are important conditioning factors in shaping migration dynamics. The findings of the project suggest that, in a context of regional integration and globalization, the movement of people is still constrained by national policy interests. Nonetheless, the proliferation of regional meetings addressing migration reveal the extent of global concern attached to migration in the 1990s and reflect several policy orientations and trends. First, converging immigration goals among groups of countries mean that coordinated strategies and a common search for mechanisms and policies serve to bolster immigration control, particularly in regard to asylum-seekers and undocumented immigrants. Linked to these considerations is that of responding to the growing

hostility and xenophobia towards immigrants in many host countries. This has led to efforts to both restrict the entry of all immigrants, with the exception of the highly skilled, and to continue to facilitate the integration of already resident immigrant groups. Finally, market and trade globalization has inspired regional arrangements which must take into account the effects of open borders on the movement of people and services. Regional trading blocs have further necessitated the harmonization of national policies and rules on international migration and refugees.

37. During 1993, two papers on specific and newly important population policy issues were completed. The paper entitled "Adolescent reproductive health: regional variations, global perspectives and universal issues" examines whether growing attention to adolescent reproductive health on the part of researchers in many disciplines and officials in many of the world's major population and health agencies is based on a common or shared analytic framework that permits policy makers to understand the underlying social realities and social systems that condition the reproductive lives of adolescent women; and whether the vast research documentation resulting from increased focus on adolescent reproductive health yields analyses that suggest constructive policy or programme responses at the country, regional or global levels. The paper entitled "The transformation of immigration policies: immigration control in the United States, Europe and Japan: a comparative approach" examines the convergence of immigration policies in the industrialized countries.

2. National population policies

38. During 1996, work continued on the study, World Population Policies. The study provides a consolidated one-volume overview of trends in population policies for the 190 countries of the world. The volume includes data sheets showing trends in national population policies from 1973 to 1995 for each of the 190 countries as compiled by the Population Policy Section data bank, as well as from the series of national inquiries that have been undertaken regularly by the Population Division since 1976. In addition to the country specific data sheets, the volume contains an overview chapter, describing and analysing trends in population policy at the regional and global levels.

3. Population policy data bank

39. The population data bank maintained by the Population Division has been continuously updated, in preparation for the sixth edition of the population policy database Global Population Policy Database, 1997 (GRIPP:1997).

40. Based on material contained in the population policy data bank, briefing papers for the Secretary-General were prepared on population issues in 27 countries (Angola, Argentina, Austria, Benin, Brazil, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, China, Colombia, France, Germany, Ghana, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Mexico, Nigeria, Poland, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Rwanda, South Africa, Switzerland, Turkey and Yemen).

41. Work is currently in progress on preparation of the questionnaire for the United Nations Eighth Population Inquiry Among Governments.

B. Population and development

42. Under the auspices of the Task Force on Basic Social Services for All (BSSA) of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, the Population Division initiated and prepared a Wall Chart on Basic Social Services for All, which includes statistical indicators to highlight where countries are now, and how much progress will be needed in order to reach the goals for the future that were agreed upon at the recent major international conferences and summits. The chart is a contribution to the work of the BSSA Task Force, one of three task forces established by the Secretary-General in 1995 to ensure a coordinated follow-up to recent United Nations conferences and summits, including the International Conference on Population and Development. The wall chart includes selected statistical indicators related to six major themes of the Task Force's concern: population and reproductive health; education; basic health care; nutrition; safe water and sanitation; and shelter. The United Nations offices and organizations represented on the Task Force actively cooperated with the Population Division in providing the best and most recent and comprehensive data for the chart.

43. In the general area of population and sustainable development, a set of country profiles has been prepared, based on the database on population, resources, environment and development (PRED Bank). The profiles present the PRED Bank data in printed form, as a supplement to the PRED Bank data files, which are available on diskette, bundled with a special version of the POPMAP mapping software developed by the Statistics Division of the United Nations.

44. Also ongoing during 1996 was a study of population factors related to poverty. The study, which has a methodological focus, includes an overview of approaches to measuring poverty and a discussion of data requirements for linking poverty measurement to the study of demographic factors.

45. The meeting of the Working Group on Projecting Old-age Mortality and its Consequences (3-5 December 1996) took up matters relevant to both sub-programmes 2 (World population projections), as discussed above, and 3 (Population policy and socio-economic development). In addition to making recommendations for extending the population estimates and projections to provide more detail at the oldest ages, the Working Group discussed the implications of population ageing and of declining mortality among the oldest old-ages (above 80 years). The Working Group particularly considered the implications for relationships between the generations and for quality of life in old age, concentrating on gaps in knowledge needed for policy and planning decisions, and practical steps for improving such knowledge.

46. A study of government views on population and the environment is in press. The report reviews official governmental statements, national reports and the draft and final documents adopted at major intergovernmental conferences dealing with population, environment and development issues from conferences in the early 1970s through the International Conference on Population and Development

in 1994. Over this period, the concept of development has evolved so as to give more attention to social aspects and sustainability of development, poverty has emerged as a core concern, and population and environmental questions have come to be viewed as inextricably linked. The review found that, by the time of the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994, Governments expressing concern with population-and-environment imbalances represented a substantial majority of the population of both developed and developing countries.

IV. MONITORING, REVIEW AND APPRAISAL, COORDINATION AND DISSEMINATION OF POPULATION INFORMATION

A. Monitoring of population trends and policies

47. At its thirtieth session, the Commission on Population and Development will have before it a concise report on world population monitoring, focusing on the topic of international migration, with special emphasis on the linkages between migration and development and on gender issues and the family (E/CN.9/1997/2). This is the second annual report on a special theme derived from the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, as proposed by the Commission at its twenty-eighth session.[9] The theme corresponds to the issues addressed in chapter X of the Programme of Action, together with relevant aspects of chapters IV, V and XII.

48. The preparation of an expanded version of the report has also been completed and the draft will be made available to the Commission as a working paper. The report provides recent information on selected aspects of international migration and covers such topics as the international migration agenda from Bucharest to Cairo and beyond; migration dynamics; international migration policies; documented and undocumented migrants; refugees and asylum-seekers; labour migration; gender issues; and interlinkages between migration and development.

49. The report also contains a set of annex tables providing indicators of the current demographic situation in major areas and regions, as well as data on population size and growth, population distribution, and fertility and mortality levels in countries, major areas and regions.

B. Coordination and dissemination of population information

1. Population Information Network

50. During 1996, the global Population Information Network (POPIN), with funding from the United Nations Population Fund, has made considerable progress towards increasing the availability and accessibility of population information. A key element of POPIN's strategy is to expand use of the Internet as a dissemination medium. This is being done in collaboration with the regional commissions, other organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations and with technical assistance from the Division of Administrative and Information Services of the United Nations Development

Programme (UNDP). With these partners, training, workshops and technical assistance are used to transfer Internet capabilities to population specialists in each of the regions.

51. For purposes of cost-efficiency, technical assistance is provided to individual institutions via the Internet whenever possible. Training for larger groups is given in the form of workshops. In November 1996, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the global POPIN Coordinating Unit held the first Asia-Pacific POPIN Internet Training Workshop in Bangkok. The workshop was attended by 14 participants representing national POPIN focal point institutions in China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, Thailand and the three UNFPA country support teams in the Asia-Pacific region. A primary goal of the Workshop was to create hypertext files of population information and data from each participating country. Early in 1997, these files will be incorporated into the global POPIN World Wide Web site, thereby expanding coverage of population information and data from the Asia and Pacific region.

52. In regions and countries that have access to the Internet, POPIN is assisting in the development of population information sections of existing Gopher/World Wide Web sites to create readily accessible sources of local and regional population information and data. In this new initiative, POPIN is working with members of the regional POPIN networks beginning with the Latin American and Caribbean Population Information Network (IPALCA). It is planned that this initiative will be extended to other regions in 1997.

53. In view of these activities, the POPIN World Wide Web site is rapidly evolving into an Internet "virtual library" of population information and data from various countries and regions. The POPIN site includes the documents of the Commission on Population and Development and the official "electronic archive" of material about the International Conference on Population and Development. During 1996, the geographical coverage of the POPIN site was expanded with contributions of research papers, newsletters and other information contributed by the United Nations regional commissions, the UNFPA country and technical support teams, the Organization of African Unity and numerous governmental and non-governmental organizations. The POPIN site now also contains 55 full-text journals and newsletters, including International Family Planning Perspectives, Population Today, Populi, Asia-Pacific Population Journal and the Population Newsletter of the Population Division of the United Nations Secretariat. The POPIN Internet site is accessed 30,000 times a month by users from approximately 86 countries. In late 1996, most countries have access to e-mail and about 100 countries have full access to the Internet and the World Wide Web.

54. For countries and regions where the Internet is not yet available or readily accessible, the global POPIN Coordinating Unit and the Division of Administrative and Information Services of UNDP are collaborating in the production of a CD-ROM version of the POPIN World Wide Web site. In November 1996, a preliminary edition of the CD-ROM was prepared for use at the POPIN Internet Technical Workshop in Bangkok. The CD-ROM was also installed on the ESCAP local area network (LAN) for use by other interested parties at ESCAP.

A revised edition of the CD-ROM, including additional national contributions, is expected to be prepared by June 1997 for distribution to all regions.

2. Publication and dissemination of research studies

55. The Population Division continues to publish the results of its research studies in a variety of formats to meet the needs of different audiences. They are widely disseminated to Governments; national and international organizations; research and educational institutions; individuals engaged in social and economic planning, research and training; and the general public. It also continues to develop and maintain databases and software, which are made available on magnetic tape and/or diskette(s). A list of the Population Division's publications and other material issued in 1996 is given in the annex to the present report.

56. The Population Division continues to receive and respond to numerous requests for population information from United Nations organizations, research institutions and individual scholars. It also provides background information to and participates regularly in international conferences and meetings of inter-agency groups and professional societies. Information from the Population Division has appeared prominently in a number of publications and reports of other United Nations bodies and international conferences and meetings.

V. TECHNICAL COOPERATION

57. During 1996, the Population Division continued to provide technical assistance services to more than 30 projects in 20 developing countries in Africa, Asia, Western Asia and Latin America and countries with economies in transition in the areas of population and development training; institutionalizing analysis and research on socio-economic and demographic data obtained from population censuses, surveys and vital registration systems; population policy; and population and development. Technical backstopping missions on projects executed by the Population Division were undertaken in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Mongolia, Morocco and Yemen by the Interregional Adviser on Population.

58. During 1996, TSS specialists in the areas of population data analysis and research, population and development strategies, and training for population and development augmented, whenever possible and as required, by other staff of the Population Division, provided substantive support to the UNFPA eight country support teams and to national projects. One regular staff member of the Population Division visited Myanmar to assist the national authorities in implementing a project on strengthening the birth spacing programme, while a TSS specialist went to Mongolia to assist in analysis of that country's second fertility survey. Ten state-of-the-art reports were published in the areas of population data analysis and measurement of reproductive health, population and development and teaching and training in population and development. In addition, TSS specialists participated in technical workshops organized by UNFPA entitled "Gender, population and development" (New York, 30 September-3 October 1996) and "Integrated RTI/STD/HIV/AIDS prevention and care in the

context of reproductive health at primary health care level" (Geneva, 21-25 October 1996); they also helped to organize and present a central paper at a session on population and development curricula needs at the annual meeting of the Population Association of America (8-11 August 1996).

59. Furthermore, missions were undertaken by a TSS specialist to country support teams in Kathmandu and Bangkok and a mission to Amman is scheduled to take place before the end of the year. Another TSS specialist went to El Salvador from 4 to 30 September 1996 as team leader to conduct a Programme Review and Strategy Development (PRSD) mission. The same TSS specialist also attended the Conference on the Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action in the ECO Region (Almaty, 18-20 April 1996), organized by the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and UNFPA. He presented a paper entitled "Strategies for achieving ICPD goals" and acted as resource person to the Conference.

Notes

[1] Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18).

[2] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.XIII.9 and corrigendum.

[3] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.XIII.13.

[4] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.II.C.1 and corrigendum.

[5] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.XIII.14.

[6] See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1995, Supplement No. 7 (E/1995/27), annex I, sect. III.

Annex

PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER MATERIAL ISSUED IN 1996
BY THE POPULATION DIVISION

Research studies

World Population Monitoring 1993. With a Special Report on Refugees. ST/ESA/SER.A/139. Sales No. E.95.XIII.8.

Child Survival, Health and Family Planning Programmes and Fertility. ST/ESA/SER.R/144 and Corr.1. Sales No. E.96.XIII.9 and corrigendum.

Reproductive Rights and Reproductive Health: A Concise Report. ST/ESA/SER.A/157 and Corr.1. Sales No. E.96.XIII.11 and corrigendum.

Abortion Policies: A Global Review, Volume III. Oman to Zimbabwe. ST/ESA/SER.A/129/Add.2. Sales No. E.95.XIII.24.

Review and Appraisal of the World Population Plan of Action, ST/ESA/SER.A/152. Sales No. E.95.XIII.27.

Living Arrangements of Women and Their Children in Developing Countries: A Demographic Profile. ST/ESA/SER.R/141. Sales No. E.96.XIII.5.

Global Population Policy Database, 1995. ST/ESA/SER.R/145. Sales No. E.96.XIII.8.

Population Policy Diskette Documentation, 1995. ST/ESA/SER.R/146.

Levels and Trends of Contraceptive Use as Assessed in 1994. ST/ESA/SER.A/146. Sales No. E.96.XIII.13.

Proceedings of expert group meetings

Population and Women: Proceedings of the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on Population and Women, Gaborone, Botswana, 22-26 June 1992. ST/ESA/SER.R/130. Sales No. E.96.XIII.10.

Family Planning, Health and Family Well-Being: Proceedings of the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on Family Planning, Health and Family Well-Being, Bangalore, India, 26-30 October 1992. ST/ESA/SER.R/131. Sales No. E.96.XIII.12.

Wall chart

World Population, 1996. ST/ESA/SER.A/159. Sales No. E.96.XIII.14.

Databases and software

Trends in Total Migrant Stock/Revision 3

International Migration Stock: Africa

South-to-North International Migration

International Migration Stock: Latin America and the Caribbean

The Components of Urban Growth: Africa

The Components of Urban Growth: Central America

The Components of Urban Growth: South America

The Components of Urban Growth: Asia

Child Mortality by Sex: Africa

Child Mortality by Sex: Asia

Child Mortality by Sex: Latin America and the Caribbean

World Population, 1950-2050 (The 1996 Revision)

Annual Populations, 1950-2050 (The 1996 Revision)

Demographic Indicators, 1950-2050 (The 1996 Revision)

Sex and Age, Quinquennial, 1950-2050 (The 1996 Revision)

Sex and Age, Annual, 1950-2050 (The 1996 Revision)

Age Patterns of Fertility, 1950-2050 (The 1996 Revision)

Urban and Rural Areas, 1950-2025 (The 1996 Revision)

Urban Agglomerations, 1950-2015 (The 1996 Revision)

GRIPP: 1995 (Global Review and Inventory of Population Policies: 1995).

Periodicals

Population Bulletin of the United Nations

No. 39. Sales No. E.95.XIII.17. Articles include: The environment and refugees: theoretical and policy issues (Anthony H. Richmond); Sex differentials in old-age mortality (Thomas Buettner); Excess female child mortality in the developing world during the 1970s and 1980s (Dominique Tabutin

and Michel Willems); Sex differences in mortality among young children in the Sahel (Thomas K. LeGrand and Cheikh S. M. Mbacké); Age patterns of child mortality in the developing world (Kenneth Hill); Recent trends and prospects in world population growth (Vasantha Kandiah and Shiro Horiuchi).

Population Newsletter

Issued biannually to provide, to a wide readership, information on the programme activities of the Population Division; on action taken by legislative bodies with competence in the population field; and on meetings on population and related issues organized by the Population Division and other United Nations organizations, as well as on recent and forthcoming publications of the Population Division.